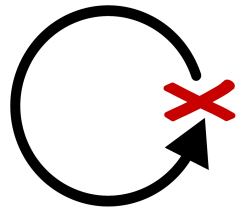




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## **METOIKOS Project**

### **CIRCULAR MIGRATION BETWEEN ITALY AND MOROCCO: A CASE STUDY**

Dr. Camilla Devitt  
European University Institute





**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE, FLORENCE**  
**ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES**

# **Circular Migration between Italy and Morocco: A case study**

**CAMILLA DEVITT**

**ROBERT SCHUMAN CENTRE FOR ADVANCED STUDIES**

**EUROPEAN UNIVERSITY INSTITUTE**

**METOIKOS PROJECT**



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The METOIKOS project is hosted by the Robert Schuman Centre for Advanced Studies and co-ordinated by Prof. Anna Triandafyllidou (anna.triandafyllidou@eui.eu ).

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## **Abstract**

Circular economic migration refers to circular movements, which are partly motivated by either making or saving money. Moroccan migration to Italy has been sedentary rather than circular over the past two decades due to four main factors: visa requirements; employee status and employment based work permits; low earnings; and the absence of a livelihood in Morocco. I present a typology of forms of circular migration between Morocco and Italy based on existing theoretical and empirical research on (circular) migration and interviews with 30 Moroccan circular economic migrants and 21 Italian and Moroccan policymakers, stakeholders, key informants and researchers, conducted during the period June-November 2010. Italian and Moroccan policies, which incentivise and obstruct circularity are also discussed.

## **Keywords**

Morocco, Italy, circular migration, immigration, (re-)integration and labour market and social policies

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## 1. Introduction

### *1.1 Moroccan migration to Italy: historical development and socio-economic characteristics*

In many respects, the initiation and rapid consolidation of Moroccan migration to Italy exemplifies the history of immigration in Italy. Moroccan migration to Italy commenced in the mid 1970s, however it remained limited until the 1990s. It began as a form of free movement prior to the introduction of visa requirements to enter Italian territory, in the context of a closure to labour immigration in traditional destinations for Moroccan migrants in Northern Europe.

Since Italy's adhesion to the Schengen visa regime in 1990, irregular migrant inflows have been significant. The activation of a system of annual quotas for the entry of non-EU workers in 1995<sup>1</sup> did not succeed in reducing irregularity, partly due to delays in approving quota decrees, a mismatch between the size of the quotas and the demand for and supply of foreign workers and bureaucratic delays in issuing authorisations for work permits. Since 1998, the quotas have contained country-specific sub-quotas with the aim of providing an incentive for sending countries to collaborate in contrasting irregular migration. However, the quota reserved for Morocco has never been higher than 4,500 per year and was only 500 in 2003 (Sciortino 2009).

Entering the country by land or sea, Moroccans often obtain residence permits as a result of one of the regular amnesties for undocumented migrants granted by Italian governments or, paradoxically, within the system of annual quotas for entry of foreign workers (Colombo 2009). The quota system is also the object of fraudulent applications; in the absence of a genuine job offer, employers request work permits for foreign workers often following payment (of up to €9,000) by an intermediary in Italy.

**Figure 1: Map of Moroccan regions**



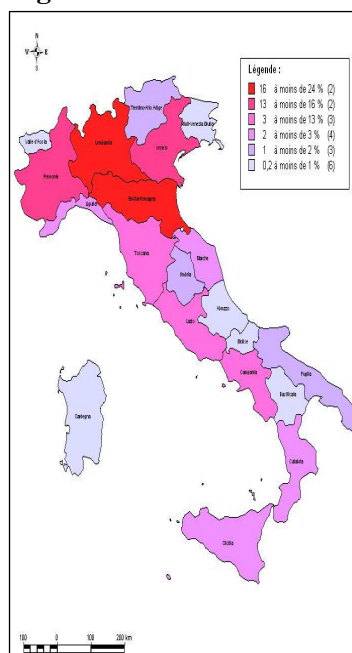
Source: Drawmeagraph.com

<sup>1</sup> The quota system was established in 1990.

The system of ex-post regularisation is a reflection of the general functioning of the Italian state and labour market. Of particular relevance are the administration's difficulties in planning and enforcement and general reliance on regularising irregular *fait accompli* (other examples include illegal buildings and undeclared activities), the dominance of informal recruitment channels in the labour market and the large informal economy, which provides employment for undocumented migrants.

By 2010, the Moroccan community in Italy, the third largest foreign community in the country, had a population of 431,529 people. The Moroccan region of Chaouia Ouardigha in the centre north of the country has retained its position as the main region of origin of Moroccans residing in Italy. Indeed, according to consular data from 2008, over a quarter of the Moroccan community in Italy hails from that region (25.3%). The region of Grand-Casablanca, a source of Moroccan immigrants in Italy since the 1990s, comes a close second (22%) and is followed by Tadla-Azilal (16.1%). Other regions which are much less significant include Rabat-Salé-Zemmour-Zaer (10.1%), Marrakech-Tensift-El Haouz (8%) and Souss-Massa-Draa (4.6%).

**Figure 2: Distribution of Moroccans resident in Italy based on regions of residency**



Source: (Mghari and Fassi Fihri 2010)

According to ISTAT, in January 2010, over half of the Moroccans residing in Italy were living in four northern regions; Lombardy (104,606), Emilia Romagna (67,262), Piedmont (62,366) and Veneto (56,704). In southern Italy, the majority of Moroccans reside in Campania (12,267), Sicily (11,468) and Calabria (10,737) (ISTAT 2010; Mghari and Fassi Fihri 2010).

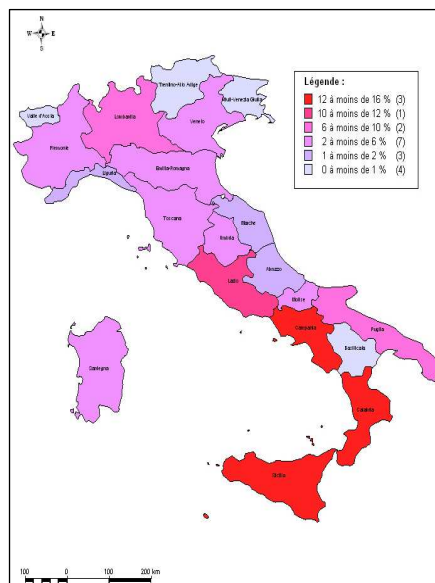
Just over half (59%) of Moroccans resident in Italy are men. The average age is 35 years and the average length of time spent in Italy is just under five years (4.9). Most Moroccans in Italy have secondary school education (57%). Nearly a fifth have primary school education (18.8%), while over a fifth are literate but do not have any qualifications.

A little under 73% of Moroccans resident in Italy are actively engaged in the Italian labour market, this proportion rising to 86.1% among men and falling to 43.3% among women. The average annual wage of Moroccan workers is €11,437, which is slightly higher than the average for immigrants in Italy in general (€10,343). Moroccans are also more likely to be employed with fixed-term contracts than other large foreign communities in Italy - 19.9% compared to the average of 15.6%. Due to low female employment, they have a higher unemployment rate than the other large foreign communities in Italy - in 2006, it was 10.8%.

The first Moroccan migrants in Italy worked in agriculture or sold Moroccan carpets and artisanal products. Moroccans then moved into other sectors such as construction, small industry and cleaning services. Today, just under 7% of Moroccans are employed in agriculture, 48.9% in industry (including 19% in construction) and 42.5% in services. By 2008, 78.5% of active Moroccans were employed, while 19% were self-employed and little over 2% searching for work. Moroccans are the immigrant group with the largest number of businesses in ownership; there were 35,308 Moroccan business owners in 2010 (out of a total of 213,267 foreign business owners). Two-thirds of Moroccan-owned businesses are in the trade sector, under a fifth in construction, five percent in transport and little over one percent in manufacturing industry (Caritas 2010; Mghari and Fassi Fihri 2010).

The most significant economic gulf within any one state in Europe is between north and south Italy.<sup>2</sup> Northern Italy is one of the most industrialized regions in Europe, with a pro-capita GDP almost twice that of southern Italy and an employment rate approximately 20 percentage points higher than in the south. Moroccans are concentrated in the north due to the existence of regular employment opportunities in industry and services. In the south, informal, precarious work is more common and most Moroccans are employed in commerce and agriculture. Self-employment among Moroccans is higher in the south (see Figure 2). For example, while 16% of Moroccans are self-employed in Milan, 52% are in Bari. Self-employment in the south generally reflects difficulties finding regular employment and a way of supplementing income derived from seasonal or occasional employment. In the north, self-employment often represents a form of social mobility (Paterno, Strozza, and Terzera 2008).

**Figure 3: Regional distribution of self-employed Moroccans in Italy**



Source: (Mghari and Fassi Fihri 2010)

Moroccan settlement in Italy is reflected in relatively high levels of family reunification and naturalisation. For example, in 2003, Moroccan citizens constituted 6% of all visas issued to foreign nationals for employment and 13% of those issued for family reunification. Moroccans are the

<sup>2</sup> For analytical purposes, Italy is often divided into North, Central and South. I focus on North and South Italy. By North I refer to the regions of Piemonte, Valle d'Aosta, Lombardy, Trentino-Alto Adige, Veneto, Friuli-Venezia Giulia, Liguria, Emilia Romagna. Southern Italy encapsulates the following regions; Abruzzo, Sicily, Sardinia, Calabria, Molise, Puglia, Basilicata and Campania.

immigrant group with the highest number of cases of naturalisation. In 2006, 3,295 Moroccans became Italian citizens, followed by 795 Albanians. Furthermore, Moroccan men have the highest rate of intermarriage with Italian women of all foreign groups.

### ***1.2. Circular economic migration and its significance between Morocco and Italy***

International circular migration is a distinct type of mobility characterised by a cyclic pattern of coming and going between a country of origin and a country of immigration (Hugo 2009). The term circular economic migration explicitly limits the field of analysis to circular movements which are partly motivated by either making or saving money. There are two main forms of circular economic migration: first, a person normally resident in his/her country of origin may decide to spend a few months abroad in order to earn some money; and second, a person principally resident abroad may go to his/her country of origin on a regular basis in order to set up and oversee an economic project.

It is important to underline that Moroccan migration to Italy has been sedentary rather than circular over the past two decades. There are four main factors, which have obstructed circularity: visa requirements; employee status and employment based work permits; low earnings; and the absence of a livelihood in Morocco. Before the establishment of a visa regime in 1990, Moroccans could freely come and go between the two states. Today their movements are restricted by immigration rules. While permits for employment/self-employment allow back and forth movements under certain conditions (see below), undocumented status prohibits circularity between Italy and Morocco as the trials and fees involved in gaining entry to Italy make return unlikely before a migrant has regularized his/her position in Italy. The majority of active Moroccans in Italy are employees and their presence in the country depends on remaining in employment. Italian employers generally need stable, dependable foreign workers and do not appreciate frequent or long absences from work and immigrants are focused on renewing their work permits in order to remain legally resident in Italy. Both visa requirements and employee status have the effect of stimulating family reunification, a phenomenon which further reduces circulation. Low income levels means that Moroccan immigrants, particularly those with families in Italy, find it difficult to save money and are generally not in a position to travel home often. Finally, most Moroccans in Italy do not have businesses or land in Morocco, which would stimulate circularity.

A low level of circularity is particularly the case in northern Italy where the vast majority of Moroccans are resident. In northern Italy, Moroccan immigrants generally have work permits, rather than self-employment permits and they have been in relatively stable employment. They appear to circulate less than those with self-employment permits and more precarious employment; the majority of Moroccans in Campania, Calabria and Sicily. However, the current economic downturn, fall in consumption and rise in unemployment in Italy, as well as economic development in Morocco, has led many Moroccans in the north and south of Italy to engage in circular trade.

A quantitative estimate of circular economic migration between the two states is precluded by the absence of administrative and survey data on back and forth movements and their motivations. This is partly explained by the fact that the concept of circular migration is a new one, which has not yet entered the vocabulary of most administrations.

**Figure 4: Map of Mediterranean region including Morocco and Italy**



Source: welt-atlas.de

## 2. Typology of Moroccan migrants circulating between Morocco and Italy

### 2.1. Methodology

The following typology is based on existing, rather scarce, theoretical and empirical research on (circular) migration and interviews with 30 Moroccan circular economic migrants and 21 Italian and Moroccan policymakers, stakeholders, key informants and researchers, conducted during the period June-November 2010. The interviews with 20 Moroccan circular migrants in Italy were conducted in Emilia-Romagna (12) and Campania (8) in order to take into account socio-economic differences between northern and southern Italy. While Emilia-Romagna is the region with the second largest population of Moroccans in Italy and interviewee identification was aided by the researcher's personal knowledge of the area, Campania is the southern Italian region with the largest Moroccan community.

The 10 interviews with circular migrants in Morocco were carried out in the town of Khouribga (9), in the region of Chaouia Ouardigha and the capital Rabat (1). The Chaouia Ouardigha region was selected as it is the most significant region of origin of Moroccans living in Italy. The interviews with circular migrants in Italy and Morocco were mainly conducted in Italian. Moroccans circulating between the two states have generally been living or coming to Italy regularly for at least five years and consequently are fluent in Italian. It also can come naturally to speak of experiences in Italy in Italian. A small number were carried out in Arabic in both countries with the use of an interpreter. The interviews with policymakers, stakeholders, key informants and researchers (see annex 1 for a list) were conducted in Italian in Italy and French in Morocco. The interviews were taped when possible and transcribed in Italian and French. Circular migrants were identified by means of snowballing in Italy. The main gatekeepers included the Emilia Romagna regional administration and cultural mediators based in Naples. The circular migrants interviewed in Morocco were selected with the help of a local association in Khouribga and a researcher in Rabat. While the number of interviews with Moroccan circular migrants was limited and snowballing results in a focus on a particular social network (in this case, traders and transporters), interviews with policymakers, stakeholders, key informants and researchers confirmed the significance of the types of circular migration identified.

## **2.2. Literature review**

Scholars of circular migration distinguish between *de facto* circular migration, which refers to “spontaneous” undocumented and legal movements and circular migration, which takes place within the context of specific state schemes (Vertovec 2007; Cassarino 2008). Most recent research on international circular migration in Europe focuses on the latter and as such, there has been insufficient research into the factors, which stimulate spontaneous circularity.

The motives for circular movements are similar to those for economic migration and mobility in general - economic necessity or the aim of safeguarding or improving the socio-economic situation of oneself, one's family or one's community (Massey and et al 1998) - however, additional factors explain why people go back and forth rather than making one-off or permanent moves. An elaboration of the potential factors determining circular economic migration between Morocco and Italy should differentiate between Moroccans normally resident in Morocco who come to Italy for seasonal work and those who are mainly resident in Italy and go to Morocco for economic motives.

First, we need to provide an explanation for why some migrants remain normally resident in their home country and go back and forth, rather than establishing themselves in the country of immigration. Empirical work on Mexican migration to the US is informative here; in particular the strategy of recurrent migration, involving regular trips back and forth from the United States for seasonal employment, while maintaining families, households, and businesses in Mexico (Massey 1987). This suggests that seasonal migration may be associated with having personal and economic ties in the country of origin. The more plentiful research on internal circular migration can also enlighten us as to why migrants circulate rather than establishing themselves in another place. For example, a study of the main determinants of movements in and out of two Nairobi slums suggests that circular movements are related to factors in both destination and origin places. Industry closure during the end-of-year festive season and insecure livelihoods and tenure in Nairobi partly explain why migrants do not stay long-term in the city, while familial ties in the place of origin pull migrants home (Beguy, Bocquier, and Zulu 2010).

Constant and Zimmerman's study of repeat and circular migration among immigrants resident in Germany for circa fifteen years provides rare insights as regards the socio-economic characteristics of circular migrants<sup>3</sup> normally resident in immigration states. They find that immigrants are more likely to exit Germany when they do not face legal restrictions to re-enter that state. Circular migrants are often less educated than settled immigrants. Males and those in possession of German passports exit more frequently. Those who have weaker labour market attachments, nuclear family members in the country of origin and who do not own real estate in Germany spend the longest periods abroad, however, these family and labour market characteristics do not have an effect on the number of exits (Constant and Zimmermann 2010). While there is a dearth of empirical research on circular migration in Europe, analyses of circular movements in the Asia-Pacific region tend to corroborate Constant and Zimmerman's findings. For example, Hugo maintains that circular migration is more likely when family members, in particular nuclear family members, are located in the country of origin, when home-country citizenship is retained, when property owned by a migrant is located in the country of origin and when one's partner is from the home country (Hugo 2009).

More specifically, a survey of Moroccans resident in European countries including Italy and visiting Morocco in the summer of 2005 provides us with important information on the main socio-economic

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<sup>3</sup> In this study, circularity is measured by number of exits from Germany and number of years out of Germany.

characteristics of those who visit Morocco frequently (four or more times in the previous three years) for unspecified motives. In general, we find that male heads of households who migrated to Europe in the 1960s and 1970s, with below secondary school education, come to Morocco the most frequently. Employers, self-employed and seasonal workers tend to come more than once a year. Visits are also related to the cost of travel and possibility to avail of free accommodation in Morocco. Regarding the former, geographical proximity explains why heads of household resident in Spain make the most frequent visits (four times or more over three years) (15,9%) following by those resident in France (11,2%), Italy (11,5%), Belgium (9,6%) and Holland (6,8%). Furthermore, those with spouses and children living in Morocco are also more likely to visit Morocco frequently. It is notable that integration in the economic, political and social life in the immigration country does not affect the frequency of visits to Morocco. Indeed, those who feel excluded in the country of immigration tend to visit Morocco slightly more frequently than others. Finally, those who invest in Morocco tend to visit the country the most frequently; 81% of this category visits at least once a year (CERED 2007).

### 2.3. Typology

The following classification is divided into two typologies according to the main country of residence of the migrants. The two typologies are based on eight dimensions, including the three dimensions highlighted in the METOIKOS concept paper: the legal or irregular nature of the movement; the level of skills of the people involved (low/semi-skilled/high-skilled); and the time length of each stay and return (short-term, medium-term and long-term circularity). As regards the legal nature of the movement, the concept paper suggests that we distinguish between circular mobility taking place under the framework of bilateral agreements, circular migrants who hold permits/identity documents that allow them to engage in circular mobility and circular migrants that cross borders illegally. In the case of migrants holding permits or identity documents permitting circularity, the main legal statuses identified in the interviews are specified, including dual citizenship, long-term resident status and work permits for employment or self-employment. Regarding skills, distinguish between unskilled workers (elementary occupations); semi-skilled workers (clerks, service workers, skilled agri-fish workers, craft and trade workers, plant/machine operators and assemblers) and skilled workers (legislators, senior officials, professionals, managers, technicians).<sup>4</sup> In terms of duration of stays and returns, I distinguish between repeated short stays taking place within less than a year; short stays of between 2 months and a year that follow an annual cycle; and long term circular migration that involves stays of a couple of years in each country.

Apart from the three dimensions outlined above, circular migrants are categorised in terms of their residency in north or south Italy; work status in the main country of residence (employed/self-employed/unemployed); number of years living in or migrating to Italy (more or less than 10 years); the country of residence of the migrant's nuclear family; and the economic activity which circular migrants engage in. The first dimension allows us to evaluate the role of socio-economic context in the receiving country in incentivising or obliging circularity. This variable is of particular importance in the case of Italy where socio-economic conditions vary significantly between the North and the South. The second considers the more specific factor of work status, with the assumption that due to lower levels of autonomy, employment is less conducive to circularity than self-employment and short-term unemployment. Regarding the number of years living or migrating to Italy (more or less than 10 years), it is expected that those in Italy for longer will be more likely to circulate. Finally, it is assumed that if the nuclear family is not present in the same state as the migrant, the latter will be more stimulated to move back and forth between country of destination and origin.

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<sup>4</sup>

This categorisation is based on the OECD's occupational skill classification; see Education at a Glance 2008.



The typologies are also ordered in terms of significance with the most common form of circularity in the first row in each table. The estimated significance of each category in terms of numbers involved in different types of circularity is based on interviews with circular migrants and policymakers, stakeholders, key informants and researchers in the two states. I must emphasise that as the empirical research carried out was not exhaustive other forms of circular economic migration between Italy and Morocco may exist. Moreover, various categories would benefit from further empirical research, in particular “Economising in Morocco”, “Seasonal street-selling and “Seasonal work in agriculture in Italy”.

Four types of economic circularity involving Moroccans principally resident in Italy were constructed based on these eight characteristics (see Table 2). The second typology of Moroccan circular migrants mainly resident in Morocco contains two types of circular economic migration (see Table 3).

**Table 2: Typology of Moroccan economic circular migrants circulating between Morocco-Italy with main residence in Italy**

	<b>Type 1: Circular trade and transport</b>	<b>Type 2: Economising in Morocco</b>	<b>Type 3: Seasonal agricultural work in Morocco</b>	<b>Type 4: Brain circulation</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>				
<b>1. Legal status in Italy</b>	Permits/id documents allowing them to circulate:  - Dual citizenship - LT residency - work permit for employment or self- employment	Permits/id documents allowing them to circulate:  - mainly work permit for self-employment	Permits/id documents allowing them to circulate:  - work permit for employment or self- employment - LT residency	Permits/id documents allowing them to circulate:  - Dual citizenship, - LT residency - work permit for self-employment
<b>2. Skill level of occupation in Italy</b>	Semi	Semi & low	Semi & low	High
<b>3. Time length of each stay and return</b>	Repeated short stays or annual stays of a few months	Two month stays annually	Three to six month stays annually	Repeated short stays
<b>4. Residence in north or south Italy</b>	North & South	South	North & South	North
<b>5. Work status in Italy</b>	Mainly self-employed and unemployed	Unemployed & employed	Employed	Mainly self- employed
<b>6. Number of years living in Italy (more or less than 10 years)</b>	Mainly more than 10 years	Both more & less than 10 years	More than 10 years	More than 10 years
<b>7. Nuclear family country of residence</b>	Mainly Italy	Morocco	Morocco or Italy	Italy
<b>8. Circular economic</b>	Transport & trade	Save money	Work in family farm	Business/developme nt project



activity				
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**Table 3: Typology of Moroccan economic circular migrants circulating between Morocco and Italy with main residence in Morocco**

	<b>Type 1: Seasonal street-selling in Italy</b>	<b>Type 2: Seasonal agriculture in Italy</b>
<b>Dimensions:</b>		
<b>1. Legal status in Italy</b>	Permits/id documents allowing them to circulate:  - work permit for self-employment	Permits/id documents allowing them to circulate:  - Dual citizenship - LT residency
<b>2. Skill level of occupation in Morocco</b>	Semi-low	Semi-low
<b>3. Time length of each stay and return</b>	3 months annually	6 months annually
<b>4. Socio-economic context in Italy (North or South Italy)</b>	South	North
<b>5. Employment status in Morocco</b>	Self –employed	Self-employed or unemployed
<b>6. Number of years living or migrating to Italy (more or less than 10 years)</b>	Mainly more than 10 years	More than 10 years
<b>7. Nuclear family residence</b>	Morocco	Morocco
<b>8. Circular economic activity</b>	Street-selling	Agriculture

### 2.3.1 Moroccan circular economic migrants based in Italy

#### **Type 1: “Circular trade and Transport”**

*-Ahmed*

Ahmed could not find work in Morocco. In 2000, he went to Perugia in the central Italian region of Umbria where his brother and cousins were living. Three years later, after regularising his position, he brought his wife and children there. He worked for five years as a builder and carpenter. Then crisis hit. Ahmed could not find work in Italy and could not return to Morocco either. The latter would be a shameful admission of failure and without money, you cannot do anything in Morocco. Since he has had papers, Ahmed has gone home to Morocco to see his family every year, spending between three weeks to two months in his home town of Khouribga. Over the past two years, his trips home have also been motivated by economic needs. He comes to sell second hand clothes, cooking instruments and other products at the open-air “Italian market” in Khouribga. He does this, as he has to pay rent of €500 a

month in Perugia, purchase food for his family and support his extended family in Morocco of which he is the sole breadwinner. It is a long and difficult trip back and forth from Italy to Morocco. In order to maximise his earnings, Ahmed fills his van to the point of risking a fine. The trip from Perugia to Genoa where he takes the ferry to Tangiers is tiring and dangerous. The ferry trip takes about two days. Ahmed is not alone. Hundreds of vans with Spanish and Italian number plates enter Tangiers each week. The Italian market at Khouribga is buzzing with local customers and Ahmed manages to support his family through this cross-border enterprise.

Ahmed's story exemplifies the most significant type of economic circularity involving Moroccans who are principally resident in Italy; circular trade and cross-border transport (Khachani 2008). Furthermore, this is the principle form of economic circular migration referred to by interviewees in the two states.

Reflecting the gender profile of most Moroccans working in commerce in Italy, this is a largely male activity and encompasses an age group ranging from the mid twenties to the mid sixties. These Moroccans buy goods in Italy and sell them in Morocco, returning with Moroccan goods to sell in Italy, mainly to the Moroccan community. They also transport other Moroccans' belongings to Morocco, an enterprise that is particularly profitable in the summer when many Moroccans go to their country of origin and cannot bring everything they want to themselves.

While they used to sell Chinese goods acquired in Italy in Morocco, Chinese settlement in Morocco has made this commercial channel redundant and this is argued to have led to a reduction in cross-border trade among Moroccan traders based in Naples. Moroccans now mainly sell second-hand Italian goods, from electronics to furniture, shoes and clothes in the weekend markets of the north-central region of Chaouia-Ouardigha and in the Central Region (Casablanca), where they and many Moroccans resident in Italy originate. This phenomenon is symbolised by the "Turin Market", an open-air market in the town of Khouribga, in Chaouia-Ouardigha, named after the northern Italian city with the largest Moroccan population in Italy. The more professional traders travel all over Morocco; selling better quality goods in the richer areas of the country and poorer quality goods in less economically developed zones. Perhaps reflecting the new consumption practices identified by Camille Schmoll in Tunisia, in particular a growing interest in imported goods, Italian goods are very popular in Morocco (2003). These items are bought in second-hand markets in Italy. Some Moroccans are specialised in buying new products from businesses, which are closing down. Some of the respondents maintained that they stored the goods in garages in Italy prior to departure and Morocco on arrival.

The vast majority circulate via road and ferry. In order to maximise earnings the vans are packed past the legal limit of 3,500 kg. This increases the risk of accidents, as well as being fined €400 by the Italian police. Another problem lies in transporting other Moroccan's belongings; as the transporters do not have receipts for these goods, the police have no proof that they are not stolen. However, in general, the Italian police are deemed to be elastic and rarely create problems for the migrants. Some send containers of products to Morocco and travel there themselves by air in order to sell the products. The latter is more expensive than transporting goods by van and is generally a collaborative effort involving a few people. These circular migrants travel back and forth from once a year to every month and spend from one week to three months in Morocco each time. Clearly, those who travel more frequently are more professionally engaged in this activity while those coming once a year do so primarily to see their families but also to cover the costs of their trip home and/or make a profit.

Cross-border auto trade and transport between Italy and Morocco is an informal activity. This informality is determined by the difficulty to make a profit within the current legal and administrative framework and earnings maximisation. As noted above, transporters and traders tend to pack their vans over the legal limit. Moreover, all of the interviewees maintained that the customs tariffs were too high to make regular transport possible. Consequently, in a “win-win” situation, the circular traders pay Moroccan customs officials under the table in order to pass through. With informal customs fees of about €1000-€1,500 per van, this is by no means cheap and is a source of much frustration among circular transporters and traders. Furthermore, the Moroccan police also request bribes in order to pass from Tangiers to Casablanca. In addition, it is difficult to regularise this enterprise. Circular migrants assert that, unlike container transport, the Italian administration does not know how to manage cross border transport involving vans filled with hundreds of disparate items. The informality of this enterprise extends to the selling of the products in Morocco and in some cases their acquisition in Italy.

The motivations of circular traders and transporters vary, however, it is mainly a case of economic necessity. A minority of these entrepreneurs choose to engage in this job rather than work for an employer. Circular traders and transporters have work permits for employment or self-employment, long-term residency status or dual citizenship and have been living in Italy for at least 5 years, with many of them in the country for more than a decade. This circular trade and cross-border transport has been a feature of Moroccan migration to Italy for the past decade at least. While the transport of other Moroccans' belongings was more profitable prior to the crisis when people had more money to send material remittances, cross-border commerce has increased substantially over the past two years. The current economic downturn and rise in unemployment in Italy, as well as concomitant economic development in Morocco, has led many Moroccans in the north and south of Italy to engage in circular trade. For example, before the economic crisis, there were three people in Bologna occupied in this activity and by the summer of 2010 hundreds were engaged in it.

In general, we find that those hailing from southern (and central) Italy work in commerce all year round in Italy, while those based in northern Italy have recently lost their jobs in construction and industry. Those working in commerce in southern (and central) Italy – in particular, Naples<sup>5</sup> - supplement their income by going to Morocco to sell Italian products between once every two years to four times a year. This cross-border trade has increased due to the economic crisis in Italy and the fall in consumption. Those based in northern Italy are carpenters, electricians, builders and mechanics, who have lost their jobs and started working in commerce over the past two years in order to support themselves and their families. Most of these individuals are middle-aged and are unlikely to be hired again in the event of an economic upturn. These people all declare that they would not be doing this job if there were work in Italy.

Two other categories of circular traders resident in Northern Italy were identified; those supplementing their income from employment or self-employment in Italy and those who began working in cross-border trade full-time with the aim of social mobility. The first category have retained their jobs and businesses during the crisis but have decided to make some extra money on the side and finance their trips home by selling Italian goods in Morocco. This is easier for self-employed individuals; in general, Italian employers require full-time, year-round workers and circular migrants find that the formal holiday periods do not provide them with sufficient time in Morocco. Indeed, one interviewee had lost jobs three or four times because he took too much time off work in order to go to Morocco. The second category were previously employed in various activities in northern Italy but chose to work in cross-border trade and transport due to an

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<sup>5</sup> Since the 1970s, Naples has been a particularly vibrant commercial centre where migrant street-sellers acquire and sell goods in the large informal economy (Schmoll 2003).

improvement in income, a preference for self-employment and the perceived lack of skilled jobs available for foreigners in Italy.

While the economic crisis is the main stimulus for the growth in this form of economic circularity between Italy and Morocco, it has been aided by the recent development of a ferry service from Genoa to Tangiers. Previously, Moroccans resident in Italy who wanted to transport goods to Morocco themselves had to drive to Sète in Southern France from where they could take a ferry to Morocco. Some people drive all the way from Naples to the Spanish border.

Interviewees generally maintain that the job is tiring and stressful and they complain about the cost of the ferry (c. €800) and passing through customs and police blocks in Morocco. One interviewee asserted that people are forced to do this job, as they generally prefer to be in one place, not suspended across the Mediterranean Sea. Nevertheless, apart from permitting people to make a livelihood, particularly in times of rising unemployment in Europe, this economic circular activity has one important advantage; it permits people to see their families (nuclear/extended) more often than most Moroccans in Italy are able to.

Policymakers, researchers and key informants in both states maintain that this is the most common form of economic circularity between Morocco and Italy. Circular trade and transport is difficult to quantify in terms of the numbers engaged in it due to its informal and transnational nature. To some extent, its high visibility may explain why people perceive it to be the most significant form of circular economic migration between the two states.

## **Type 2 “Economising in Morocco”**

– *Yussef*

Yussef was only sixteen years old when he came to Italy. He came alone hidden in a car all the way from Morocco to Turin. Yussef headed to Naples where he had relations and friends. He stayed with a foster family until he was eighteen. A local association helped him get a self-employment permit just before he turned eighteen, as well as a job. There is not much regular employment in Naples and consequently it is difficult to get a work permit for employment. Yussef did an apprenticeship with a welder for six months. Afterwards, he had a few short-term jobs which lasted about a month each, for example in a restaurant. Then he worked in Perugia, in central Italy, as a metal-mechanic for a year. However, the firm in Perugia has temporarily suspended its activity due to the economic crisis and Yussef has been out of work since. He is not yet married and his parents are in Morocco. Since he regularised his position in Italy, Yussef has gone to Morocco every year. He stays for about two months. He goes to Morocco when he is not working to see his family, relax and save money. With €1,000, he can live for five months in Morocco as he stays with his parents. When he is unemployed there is no point in staying in Italy. He doesn't work while in Morocco as the wages are low. Yussef would like to go home every six months. If you buy a plane ticket in advance it doesn't cost a lot. He spent €200 the last time. Yussef knows that he is in a better situation than others who do not have papers, some of whom haven't been home for seven years. He

hopes to find a good job in northern Italy, like a metal-mechanic job, buy a big house and bring his parents to Italy. He has two brothers in Italy and his sister is married in Morocco so his parents are alone now.

Spending a few months in Morocco every year in order to relax, spend time with family members and save money is common among young Moroccans in Campania. These young men are legally resident in Italy, generally in possession of permits for self-employment and are often employed in short-term, casual jobs.

Due to a lack of regular work in Southern Italy, when renewing their permits, migrant workers often get business licenses and then work permits for self-employment. They can go back and forth regularly with this permit. In reality, they are often intermittently employed rather than working for themselves. Precarious employment incentivises young unmarried Moroccans to go to Morocco for a few months a year. They do not have to consider employer needs as they go when unemployed. Moreover, they save money by going to Morocco; they stay with their families there and do not have to pay expenses in Italy for a couple of months. As they are unmarried, they do not have to fund the trip for family members and can avoid having to maintain an apartment in Italy while in Morocco. Most of this category of circular economic migrants does not work while in Morocco. They do not feel that it is worth their while as the wages are much lower than in Italy. One of the interviewees asserted that the people who work in Morocco when on their holidays are married and have families to look after. This category of circular economic migration between Italy and Morocco is significant among young Moroccans in Campania. A cultural mediator based in Naples maintained that as a general rule “The older generation spend most of their time in Morocco and three months in Italy. The younger ones are mainly in Italy and spend two months in Morocco drinking tea”. Further interviews in other regions would be necessary in order to understand if it is a common form of circularity in other parts of the country. Due to the higher significance of work permits for self-employment in the south of the country, it seems likely that this form of circularity is more common there.

### **Type 3 “Seasonal work in Morocco”**

– *Mohamed*

Mohamed came to Italy twelve years ago to join his brothers in Salerno, Campania. Though initially undocumented, he regularised his position immediately with the help of a local association. Mohamed is now planning to request a long-term residency permit. He works in agriculture, in particular the cultivation of fennel, lettuce and other crops and he uses a tractor for his work. Mohamed feels relatively at home in Salerno as the environment is similar to where he is from in the countryside in Morocco and the people are friendly. His wife and two children live in Morocco. Mohamed goes to Morocco every year for three months and he works on his father's land. His father grows wheat, potatoes and carrots. His father is eighty and his mother seventy so they need his help. His wife and children live near his parents. He spent two years in Morocco between 2008 and 2009.

Mohamed would like to get documents for his children so that they can come to Italy on holiday. He doesn't want them to come to live in Italy as it would cost too much to support them. There are no problems traveling through Italy and France, but it takes a long time to get through customs in Spain as they check work permits. Mohamed would like if there were a ferry to Morocco from Campania.

The third type of circular migrant based in Italy is resident in Northern and Southern Italy and returns to Morocco every year for three to six months to work on the family farm. This circular migrant is mainly male and is legally resident in Italy. They are often employed in agriculture and live in a rural environment in Italy but some of them live in urban contexts and are employed in other sectors like construction or engage in street-selling. Reflecting the employment situation of the majority of Moroccans in Italy, these migrants are generally employed in unskilled and semi-skilled work in Italy. Their families are variably based in Italy and Morocco and this partly determines the frequency of trips to Morocco. It is difficult to ascertain the significance of this type of circularity. It is clearly limited to migrants originating from rural areas whose families own land. It was not referred to by many interviewees when asked about circular economic movements between Italy and Morocco.

#### **Type 4 “Brain circulation”**

- *Adil*

Adil arrived in Italy for the first time with his father in 1989 when he was twenty years old. His first job was in a shoe factory in Naples. Seven years later he came to Imola in the region of Emilia Romagna where he took a course in building. He found a job immediately and worked in construction for eight years. He brought his two sisters to Italy and found a job for one of them in a packaging firm. The owner of the firm, an Italian, told Adil that he was having trouble with his Italian workers who did not tend to stay in the firm for very long. Adil began bringing workers to the firm and then he and his brother established their own firm to which the Italian firm subcontracts work. Adil's firm is more punctual than the other firms which worked for the Italian in the past. He has forty employees of various nationalities including Albanians, Romanians, Italians and Moroccans. Adil and the Italian businessman are considering opening up a filial in Morocco. In the meantime, Adil and his brother are investing in Morocco. They bought nearly 100 hectares of land ten years ago and are growing wheat. They bought the machinery in Italy. They are also planning to plant olive and fruit trees. The Moroccan government are financing 60% of Adil's agricultural investment. The brothers also build and sell property in Morocco. Adil goes to Morocco between five and fifteen times a year and stays a week each time. His brother is less capable in managing the business in Italy and spends about five months in Morocco per year. While Adil's parents went back to Morocco ten years ago, the two brothers' families are in Italy and his brother brings his family

when he goes to Morocco for more than a month; the children are only four and two years old. The advantage of investing in Morocco is primarily financial. On the other hand, Adil maintains that the Moroccan government tends to provide much more assistance to foreigners than to Moroccans who go to Morocco with a project. When he went to ask for a piece of land on which to build a factory in Morocco, he was asked for money but after five years the project only exists on paper. Adil does not want to live in Italy for his whole life. He finds that in Italy a foreigner is always a foreigner and that the majority of Italians don't want to mix with Moroccans. When Adil stops working he will leave Italy.

Adil's story is a classic one of the self-made man. However, it is an extremely unusual story for a Moroccan immigrant in Italy. Brain circulation between Italy and Morocco involves Moroccans resident in Italy for over twenty years who are either dual citizens or long term residents. This category mainly consists of males, some of whom have university degrees. Their families are generally with them in Italy and of the five interviewees, two are married to Italians. These immigrants have worked in various jobs, generally working their way up the career ladder from manual labour to business ownership, directing non-governmental organisations and public sector employment. They have achieved the legal and economic stability from which they can create an economic project in their country of origin. Some of them have opened businesses in Morocco, others buy, build and sell property or assist Italians investing in Morocco. Some of them bring small groups of Italian tourists to Morocco, others manage development projects including sustainable tourism and rural development projects. They go to Morocco between once a month and four times a year and stay for between five days and three months at a time.

These people are generally not forced to circulate in order to make ends meet. The advantages are financial and social/sentimental. This category of circular migrants make a profit from circulating and some of them feel that they are helping their families or co-nationals in Morocco by means of providing them with a livelihood, creating employment or by improving local infrastructure. There are various incentives to invest in Morocco now. For example, a representative of the Moroccan Chamber of Commerce in Italy asserts that previously it took about a year to set up a business there due to bureaucratic requirements and delays but that now it can be done in fifteen days. Moreover, in the agricultural sector, the government provides significant financial support for investors. The Italian regions also provide funding for development projects in countries of significant out-migration to Italy, which Moroccan non-governmental organisations in Italy can apply for.

Over the past decades remittance transfers from Moroccans resident in Italy have continuously increased, at least until the global economic downturn of 2008 (ICMPD and IOM 2010). In 2004, Morocco was the world's largest remittances receiver in per capita terms (de Haas 2007). The above mentioned survey of Moroccans resident in Europe visiting Morocco during the summer of 2005 provides us with general information regarding the investments in Morocco of Moroccans resident in Italy. Moroccans resident in Italy mainly invest in property (86.7%), agriculture (4.4%), commerce (3%), tourism (1%) and industry (1%). This investment structure mirrors that of Moroccans resident in other European countries such as Spain and France; particularly France, as Spanish residents invest significantly more in commerce (8.3%). The better off, employers and self-employed invest the most, however, the better educated are less inclined to invest in Morocco. The longer the duration of stay in Europe, the more likely it is that Moroccans invest in Morocco. Furthermore, in contrast to findings regarding the socio-economic characteristics of frequent visitors to Morocco, those who feel integrated in Europe invest more in Morocco (CERED 2007).

The traditional focus of investments in real estate is explained by various socio-economic factors including the fact that it is a low risk investment and status symbol (de Haas 2007). However, it also reflects the fact that only a minority of Moroccan immigrants resident in Italy are in the position to open a business in Morocco. A representative of the Moroccan Chamber of Commerce in Italy maintains that as the majority of Moroccan immigrants are employed in manual jobs, they do not earn enough to save for significant investment in Morocco. Furthermore, there can be difficulties in managing businesses from afar. It is necessary to have a trusted person in Morocco or to be able to spend considerable time there in order to manage a business. Circular migrants interviewed maintained that they only knew a couple of other Moroccans resident in Italy who owned businesses in Morocco. Nevertheless, a third of the investment plans of those visiting Morocco in 2005 were in commerce (CERED 2007), which reflects factors such as government incentives and a growth in consumerism in Morocco and may also suggest an improvement in immigrants' finances or an accumulation of savings (prior to the economic downturn).

Involvement in development projects is also rare, perhaps because Moroccan associations in Italy are still largely embryonic and mainly focus on questions of local community and religious and cultural maintenance.<sup>6</sup>

### 2.3.2. Moroccan circular economic migrants based in Morocco

#### **Type 1: “Seasonal street selling in Italy”**

*- Ibrahim*

Ibrahim has been coming to Italy for twenty six years and looks older than his years. He got papers in 1987. He spends three months in Italy every year, selling t-shirts and other things on his cart. Ibrahim has a license to sell in Italy and pays his dues. For most of the year he lives in Morocco with his family. He prefers to be based in Morocco as it costs less and in any case now things are not too good in Italy. Two of his sons live in Italy, however. Ibrahim lives in San Marcellino, a small town outside of Naples when in Italy. There is a large Moroccan community in San Marcellino, a make-shift mosque and more than one Hallal butchers. It is cheaper to live in the provinces than Naples and Ibrahim feels more at home there as he is from the countryside in Morocco. Ibrahim plans to stop coming to Italy when he reaches retirement age.

This category appears to be the most significant type of economic circularity between Morocco and Italy involving Moroccans who are principally resident in Morocco. It is primarily a Southern Italian phenomenon and is a relatively historic form of circular economic migration between the two countries as Moroccans have been engaged in street-selling since the beginning of their migratory movement to Italy in the 1970s. Rates of settlement among Moroccan street-vendors increased over the past decade. While in the mid 1990s many Moroccans returned to Morocco twice a year, by the

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<sup>6</sup> According to a survey of immigrant associations of 2001, Moroccans were the most active foreign group in terms of association creation. Most of the 59 Moroccan associations were in Emilia Romagna and Lombardy (Consiglio Nazionale Dell'Economia e del Lavoro 2001).



early 2000s many of them were staying in Italy all year round, either engaged in commerce or employed in other sectors during the winter months (Censis 2002). Seasonal street-selling involving returns to Morocco thus probably concerns a minority of street-sellers. While many Moroccan street-vendors in Southern Italy are undocumented, those who spend just a few months a year in Italy are necessarily legally present.

These circular migrants are generally male and are most often of the first generation of Moroccans in Italy, however, some more recent arrivals also engage in this form of circularity. They come to Italy for the Italian holiday periods in order to sell. During the Summer, between May and October, they sell by the seaside. Then they go home to Morocco. Some of them come back for Christmas and Easter. These migrants are generally from rural areas in Morocco, the majority from Chaouia-Ouardigha in North Central Morocco, and they often cultivate wheat on their farms during the rest of the year. As such they have two lives; one as a farmer in Morocco and another as a hawker in Italy. These migrants tend to buy their merchandise – mainly clothing and small objects - from Chinese stockists in Naples. Their families are in Morocco and when in Italy they generally stay in provincial settings where they feel more at home and where the rent costs less. They pay about €30-€40 a month, though they find that this is still rather expensive for them. It is not a problem to leave the farm in Morocco for a few months as other family members will look after it for them. A key informant, whose uncle drives a bus from Naples to Morocco and back every week, maintains that these circular migrants come to make money and bring it back to Morocco. They have no wish to settle or integrate in Italy and do not trust the Italian authorities.

#### **Type two: “Seasonal agriculture in Italy”**

- *Mourad*

Mourad and his family were living in Faenza, in the Region of Emilia Romagna for twenty years. Mourad inherited a farm in Morocco and was having trouble supporting his family in Italy so he decided to move back to Morocco with his family. He cultivates olive and fruit trees, which he introduced from Italy. It is cheaper to live in Morocco; in Faenza rent is relatively costly. In the summer, Mourad comes to Faenza for employment in the fruit harvest. Afterwards he returns to Morocco. He is able to come to Italy as he has long-term residency status.

The category of circular economic migrants based in Morocco who come to Italy for seasonal work in agriculture are a minority of Moroccan migrants in Italy today. Prior to the introduction of visa requirements, Moroccans used to go back and forth between Italy and Morocco for seasonal work in agriculture. For example, many interviewees spoke of how Moroccan teachers used to come to pick tomatoes in Italy during their summer holidays. Now, most foreign seasonal farm workers in Italy live in Italy all year round. Very few migrants employed in seasonal agriculture in Italy have permits for seasonal work. For example, according to the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs, in 2009, while 34,668 permissions to request visas for seasonal work were issued to non-EU nationals, only 11,719 seasonal work permits were effectively requested across Italy. In fact, it appears that the seasonal work permit system is of negligible use to employers who have a choice of readily available migrant

workers to hire; including migrants who enter the country with tourist visas, migrants with resident permits for non-seasonal employment or other motives, students and undocumented migrants.

These circular migrants have lived in Italy for many years and are either long term residents or dual citizens. They prefer to be based in Morocco as it is less costly and they have their families there. Some of them are employed in Morocco in agricultural work on their own land while others do not work in Morocco. Some work for some months in Italy and then receive agricultural unemployment benefit for the rest of the year, while living in Morocco. This category of circular economic migrants was mentioned by interviewees in northern Italy. It was only mentioned twice and it was further asserted to be an uncommon lifestyle.

### 2.3.3. Summary of main factors facilitating economic circularity

#### **Main factors facilitating economic circularity between Morocco and Italy**

##### **Italy**

- ⤴ Legal status, long-term residency status & in particular dual citizenship
- ⤴ Self-employment
- ⤴ Occasional/fixed-term employment
- ⤴ Economic success in Italy
- ⤴ More than ten years residency in Italy
- ⤴ Social integration e.g. inter-marriage

##### **Morocco**

- ⤴ An activity in Morocco (e.g. a farm)
- ⤴ Nuclear family in Morocco

### **3. The role of policy**

*“Nobody thinks about those that do this job, we work and we help two states but nobody thinks about these people”*

Circular transporter and trader, Bologna June 2010

The case of Moroccans circulating between Morocco and Italy for economic motives is one of spontaneous or individual initiatives, which is not regulated by any bilateral or multi-lateral agreement between states. No cases of regulated circular migration were identified. The role of policy in this case is indirect and involves creating (positive/negative) incentives for or obstacles to individual initiatives.

#### **3.1. Labour market and social policy:**

As noted above, immigrants in Italy have a low investment potential as they are generally employed in low-skilled, low-paid jobs. Indeed, Italy is characterised by an economic regime based on low skills and low wages; the typical firm being a small family business relying on cheap, low skilled labour.

Moreover, real wage growth in the private sector has steadily declined since the mid 1970s, reaching zero growth in the 1990s.

To a much larger degree than the rest of Western Europe, the Italian production model has remained unchanged since the 1950s; the main exports being from traditional low-skill sectors specialising in low-tech goods such as textiles and mechanical appliances, which are more and more exposed to competition from developing countries. Cost competitiveness has reigned as the commercial strategy; Italian industrial and innovation policy failing to improve the productivity of Italian firms. State efforts to support innovation have been highly dispersed and have achieved negligible results. Moreover, the normative, fiscal and financial context does not incentivise small firms to increase their size; the size of companies being an important factor for investment in innovative management or production techniques.

The “circular trade and transport” and “economising in Morocco” categories make trips to Morocco due to difficulties supporting themselves in Italy. Immigrants find it difficult to find regular employment in Italy, particularly in the south of the country. High levels of regulation in the primary labour market and high labour taxes and social contributions inhibit regular employment creation. This pushes many italians and foreigners into regular and irregular self-employment.

Moreover, eligibility for social benefits is particularly circumscribed in Italy, with large swathes of the labour force receiving little or no public support when unemployed. Just under 62% of the Italian welfare state budget goes to the pension system (Ferrera 2006). This means that public support for other segments of the population, the young and working-age population, is limited. Moreover, the welfare state is an insurance based system, manifesting a particularly low level of universality. Workers employed in medium/large firms and the public sector receive generous pensions and relatively generous benefits for other social risks, employees of small firms, traditional sectors like construction and agriculture, the self-employed and atypical workers generally get minimum pensions and limited or no benefits for other risks, and those who work in the informal economy can only apply for means-tested social checks for the elderly with no income. Low levels or lack of social protection for certain sections of the workforce is based on the assumption that these people can rely on their family for support. This ‘male breadwinner’ welfare model is based on a consensus whereby the family is the fulcrum of the welfare state and fathers, assumed to be employed in the primary labour market, provide for secondary workers, their wives and children.

Moreover, the generosity and duration of benefits for employees of medium to large firms, while comparable to the European average, are not high. Unemployment benefit is far below the European average and it is necessary to have twelve months contributions in order to be eligible for the standard “ordinary” benefit. Regardless of whether an individual has found work or not, the benefit is stopped after eight months (12 months for those of fifty years of age and over). As the annual average wage in Italy, based on purchasing power parity, is the lowest in Western Europe following Greece and Portugal (OECD 2011), the unemployed find it hard to survive without further support from their families or informal work.

The unemployment rate reached 8.7% in Italy in May 2010. While job losses were initially concentrated among those on temporary and atypical contracts, they more recently concern permanent employees. In response to the economic crisis, the Italian government has temporarily extended social benefits to groups who are not normally eligible, in particular providing employees of small firms with access to the *Cassa Integrazione Guadagni*. However, unemployment is expected to rise as more subsidised workers (*Cassa Integrazione* and other schemes) exhaust their rights (OECD 2010).

In mid 2010, 276,000 foreigners were registered as unemployed and looking for work (11.6% of total unemployment), 185,000 of who were in Northern Italy. Migrant workers are in a particularly vulnerable situation as irregular work is higher among them than Italians; the former making up one-sixth of informal workers. In the event of job loss, immigrants who are employed irregularly do not have access to any unemployment benefits. Furthermore, immigrants employed regularly may not be

eligible for unemployment benefits due to short-term or discontinuous employment. The minority of migrant workers employed in medium-large firms and hence eligible for primary labour market benefits such as *Cassa Integrazione* (as well as those receiving the recently extended *Cassa Integrazione (Cassa Integrazione in deroga)*), may still be obliged to work irregularly in order to supplement this benefit as they will in general receive less family support than Italians. Finally, as most non-EU immigrants' presence in Italy is dependent on employment, when they lose a job, they must find another job or become self-employed within six months. If they have not found work within six months they risk not being able to renew their work permits.

Thus, immigrants are obliged to be self-reliant in Italy. Some of my interviewees had been regularly employed and were consequently eligible for social benefits. However, these benefits were perceived to be inadequate to support a family in Italy. For example, one man of fifty-five years of age who had been employed in a firm for 20 years received *Cassa Integrazione* support for a few years when the firm was hit by the economic crisis. However, this benefit was considered insufficient and moreover at his age he felt he was unlikely to find another job so he began a circular transport-trade enterprise. Informal circular economic activity is thus often a substitute for adequate public social assistance in Italy and can be termed a safety net. In fact, the informal economy in Italy traditionally plays this role.

Finally, policymakers and stakeholders suggested that the fact that Moroccans cannot aggregate pension entitlements from Morocco and Italy creates a disincentive to circularity. Italy has negotiated Social Security Agreements (SSAs) with a number of countries, principally where Italians have emigrated to in the past. There is no agreement with Morocco. Moroccans preserve their rights to contribution-based pensions on their return to Morocco, however, they must first reach retirement age in Italy.<sup>7</sup> As there is no SSA, Moroccans cannot aggregate their contribution periods in Italy and Morocco to establish the eligibility and sum of their pensions and receive a pro-rata payment from each country (Avato 2008).

### **3.2. Immigration and (re-) integration policy**

Immigration and integration policy affect economic circularity between Morocco and Italy in various ways. First, weak immigration controls and the fact that it is considered easy to regularize one's position when in Italy explain why many Moroccans chose to go to Italy in first place. Many interviewees came to Italy prior to Italian adherence to the *Schengen* visa regime while later arrivals stressed that it is the easiest country in Europe where undocumented migrants can get papers. In fact, these were the main reasons for coming to Italy rather than to another European state.

Circular economic migration between Morocco and Italy involves Moroccans legally present in Italy. As a rule, the undocumented do not leave Italy, as they fear that they will not be able to return. Moreover, many of them have paid vast sums in order to arrive in Italy undocumented and these people are particularly unlikely to risk a trip home. The stronger the legal status the more likely Moroccans are to engage in circularity. Dual citizenship and long-term residency appear to be the most conducive to circularity, undoubtedly because people with these statuses are able to think beyond permit renewals. However, many migrants circulate with work permits; both employment and self-employment permits. The two interviewees involved in development projects in Morocco are dual citizens, married to Italians. This suggests that social integration via inter-marriage may stimulate brain circulation; perhaps because marriage with a "native" provides immigrants with access to social networks and social and cultural capital, which may help and stimulate attempts to initiate development projects in the country of origin.

Nevertheless, long-term circular movements are not facilitated by Italian immigration legislation. Short trips and stays of a few months in the country of origin are possible for work permit holders.

<sup>7</sup>

The non-contributory statutory minimum pension cannot be received in Morocco as there is no SSA.

However, if an immigrant stays in his home country for more than half the duration of his work permit (six consecutive months for work permits of a year and one year for work permits for two years), his work permit expires and he must ask for a new visa in order to return to Italy. As an official from the Interior Ministry maintains, this restriction on the duration of time spent outside of Italy clearly inhibits circularity.

As regards specific schemes or provisions for circular migration, Article 24.4 of the Consolidated Act on Immigration (Law no.40/1998) stipulates that seasonal migrant workers who come to Italy within the annual quota for seasonal workers in agriculture and tourism and who comply with the conditions of the permit and return to their country on its expiry, are given precedence with respect to other citizens of their country within the quota the next year. Furthermore, based on Article 5.3(b) of the Act, when a migrant has been employed on seasonal work permits for two consecutive years, employers can apply for three-year seasonal work permits (EMN 2010). However, these incentives for circularity are not successful in the Italian case. Research into foreign seasonal workers involving over 300 interviews in Caserta, Rimini and Trentino-Alto Adige found that only five percent of seasonal workers had availed of the precedence provision (Censis 2002). As noted above, most seasonal migrant workers do not have work permits for seasonal work. Indeed, this quota is not fully utilized, reflecting the dominance of informal recruitment channels in the Italian labour market.

Italy signed a labour agreement with Morocco in November 2005 which aimed to regulate and organise flows of workers between the two countries. In 2007, an executive protocol was signed which stipulated that ANAPEC, the Moroccan Agency for Promoting Work and Skills (*Agence National de Promotion de l'Emploi et des Compétences*), would be charged with management on the Moroccan side. However, unlike Spain and France, Italy has not developed specific programmes of labour mobility with Morocco; ANAPEC has been managing circular labour migration schemes in France and Spain since 2001, most notably, strawberry picking in the Huelva region of Spain (Khachani 2008). Italian representatives of employers in agriculture and tourism, the two sectors which require seasonal workers, have informed ANAPEC that they are not able to make large requests for workers like in Spain, as Italian firms are small and need just a few employees and when they need to recruit they look in their immediate vicinity. A representative of ANAPEC asserts that despite two exploratory missions to Italy and the efforts of a Moroccan resident in Italy to promote collaboration with ANAPEC, they have not sent one worker to Italy. The few requests for workers – which were not for circular migrants – that have come from Italy (for example, one for ten masons from the Lombardy region) have all led nowhere. In two of the cases, people were trained in Morocco for work in Italy but were then not called to Italy and in the last one an initial request from Rome for 1,000 workers for the re-construction in Abruzzo was subsequently not followed up.

The Italian government and the European Commission Aeneas community action programme funds various projects, which aim to involve immigrants in Italy in the development of Morocco, however these projects have not strictly focused on promoting circular migration and they are temporary projects rather than long-term schemes.

There are no policies in Italy and Morocco for the integration or re-integration of circular migrants. Circular migrants resident in Morocco who spend a few months in Italy every year come to Italy on an individual basis to make money and do not aim to settle in Italy or integrate while there. Their knowledge of Italy and social relations are limited to what is necessary in order to carry out their temporary work and save as much money as possible. Circular migrants mainly resident in Italy tend to be resident in Italy for at least five years and to be well acquainted with the Italian socio-economic and political context. Despite the longevity of their presence in Italy, many of them do not feel accepted or understood by Italians. This inadequate social integration may incentivise economic projects in the country of origin. At the same time, social integration, for example by means of inter-marriage, facilitates economic circularity by providing migrants with access to social networks and social and cultural capital. These migrants generally do not have to re-integrate in Morocco during

circulation as they often spend very short periods there and make use of their existing family and social networks.

### ***3.3. Moroccan policy and practice towards Moroccans resident abroad (MRE)***

Moroccan policy and authorities are perceived by circular migrants to both help and hinder their activities. The Moroccan government provides incentives for investment, though they do not specifically target Moroccans resident abroad. Incentives to internal and foreign investments include exemption from corporate taxes for the first five years of business. The Moroccan government promotes tourism and agricultural development among other sectoral initiatives and the improvement in investment conditions over the past decade has led to an increase in investments from Moroccans living abroad (de Haas 2007). In 2001, the government launched a tourism development strategy “The 2010 Vision” based on the preparation of Regional Tourism Development Programmes. Investment incentives include VAT exemption for capital goods, machinery and equipment acquired in Morocco for a period of twenty four months from the date of commencement of business of the company. Furthermore, the Moroccan Fund for Tourism Development provides investment premiums. To encourage private investments in the agricultural sector, the State grants fiscal incentives and financial aid in the form of subsidies and bonuses within the framework of the Funds for Agricultural Development (MIDA 2010).

The Moroccan government has an explicit policy to assist Moroccans resident abroad (MRE). Various national institutions are charged with this task. Among other objectives, the Ministry of the Moroccan Community Residing Abroad (MCMRE) created in 1993 and the Council of the Moroccan Community Abroad (CCME), created in 2007, aim to safeguard the moral and material rights of Moroccans living abroad in their host country and Morocco and encourage the participation of Moroccans abroad in the development of Morocco. They are mainly active in the organisation of conferences, research and training. The Hassan II Foundation for Moroccans residing abroad was set up in 1990 and supports educational and cultural initiatives relating to the Arabic language, national culture and Islam among Moroccans living abroad and provides social and legal assistance (ICMPD and IOM 2010). However, the Moroccan authorities do not consider the Moroccans resident in Italy as a particularly important potential source of expertise for the development of Morocco, which is reflected in the fact that only two Moroccans resident in Italy were nominated to the CCME (Coslovi and Gomes Faria 2009). In a recent MCMRE study on the potential contribution of the MRE to Moroccan development, it is maintained that “The MRE in Spain and Italy are like the first generation in France, that is, non-qualified migrants. In Spain, the MRE are mainly active in agricultural production and in Italy they are employed in the services sector” (MCMRE and IOM 2009).

During the international economic crisis, the government has provided some support to Moroccans living abroad. In June 2009, the Moroccan government introduced medical coverage for Moroccans abroad (“Mutuelle des Marocains à l'Etranger”) who return to Morocco temporarily or permanently from a country with which there is no bilateral agreement. Furthermore, incentives for investments in Morocco were introduced in 2009 including a 50% reduction in exchange commission on all external financial transactions (ICMPD and IOM 2010). Nonetheless, the circular migrants interviewed, in particular circular traders and transporters, perceive Moroccan policy towards expatriates to be largely rhetoric. They feel that they are considered to be well-off as they live in Europe and as such above all sources of revenue. Circular traders and transporters complain that the Moroccan authorities obstruct rather than aide their circularity. For example, cars with foreign registration plates are fined if found in Morocco for more than three months. Moreover, apart from customs tariffs (and corruption fees), the police demand payments along the route to and from Tangiers to other parts of Morocco. One interviewee stated that “from the second you enter Morocco you pay”.

#### **4. The role of networks**

Networks, in particular family networks, explain to an extent why Moroccans choose to migrate to Italy in the first place. While the Italian labour market and immigration regimes account for the scale of labour immigration over past decades, family networks are important intermediary factors. In fact, nearly all interviewees had a family member in Italy on arrival. Social networks are particularly important for the circular transport enterprise. In order to set up a business transporting people's belonging to Morocco, it helps to have a network of acquaintances that trusts that you will take care of their things. Moreover, Moroccan circular traders tend to sell their goods in their region of origin, where family members are also involved in selling the goods at times. In general, however, while the family network can be important, wider networks did not emerge as essential elements for economic circulation. Indeed, the circular migrants interviewed appeared to be extremely independent individuals who generally moved alone or at most with a family member.

#### **5. Self-perpetuation, settlement or return?**

Among those who lost their jobs in northern Italy, circular trade and transport is, in general, augured as a short-term enterprise, which will be given up if the circular migrant finds another job in Italy. Circular trade and transport is not self-perpetuating in itself. It does not make it difficult to move into other jobs or enterprises in either Italy or Morocco. It is the difficulty to find an alternative livelihood, which may oblige migrants to persist in this enterprise. Moroccans in Campania who spend a few months in Morocco a year in order to save money (relax and see their families) will continue to do so as long as they do not find more stable employment and do not have to support a family based in Italy, both of which preclude long absences. Brain circulation can lead to return. In fact, nearly two-thirds of investments are made by heads of households who intend to return to Morocco and having an economic project in Morocco is associated with nearly 40% of returns of Moroccans resident in Italy (CERED 2007). However, some of the “brain circulators” interviewed enjoy living between two states and do not plan to return to Morocco. Moroccans who undertake seasonal work in Italy can be expected to continue to do so for as long as is necessary; some will do so until retirement age while others will stop when they have made enough money to improve their quality of life in Morocco. Those working seasonally on the family farm in Morocco can be expected to do so until either they are no longer needed or until they inherit the farm themselves and return to Morocco.

The circular migrants interviewed highlight the fact that the economic climate in Morocco has improved over the past decade. Indeed, one interviewee says he brings money from Morocco to people in Italy who have lost their jobs. Migrants, policymakers and experts highlight that there are labour shortages in Morocco, in agriculture and construction. The majority of interviewees would like to return to Morocco; indeed, Moroccans in Italy express the intention to return to Morocco more frequently than those in other European states (Mghari 2008). This can be positively or negatively motivated; some of them simply miss their country, while others do not feel at home in Italy, particularly in the context of the recent rise in anti-immigrant sentiment as a result of the economic crisis. However, many immigrants in Italy are unable to return to Morocco for two main reasons; first, they have not been able to save enough money and did not invest in Morocco a decade ago when property prices were significantly lower; and second, their children have grown up or are growing up in Italy. While unemployment is rising in Italy, interviewees maintained that in order to return to Morocco you need to have money. For circular traders and transporters who were previously employees in northern Italy, circularity represents economic survival and it can be seen as a kind of limbo between work in Italy and the ultimate aim of a return to Morocco. At the same time, some circular migrants maintain that they prefer working in Italy than Morocco as the wages are higher and you can find regular work in the north of the country. Moreover, some interviewees stressed the ongoing problem of unemployment in Morocco.

## **6. Concluding remarks**

### ***6.1. Is the concept of circularity useful?***

Circular migration has been proposed by the European Commission as a new approach in responding to member states' needs for foreign workers and providing an alternative to undocumented migration. This back and forth movement is also presented as a form of migration which will be particularly beneficial to sending states; by reducing brain drain and facilitating socio-economic development.

The Commission defines circular migration as a form of managed migration allowing some degree of legal mobility back and forth between two countries. Two forms of circular migration are considered most relevant in the EU context; business people and professionals resident in the EU engaging in an activity in their country of origin and people resident in a third country who come to the EU temporarily for work, study or training, notably, seasonal workers (CEC 2007).

The Italian Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs aims to establish circular migration schemes similar to the Spanish-Moroccan initiative in Huelva. On the first of April 2010, a circular from the Ministry of Labour and Social Policies reserved 4,000 admissions within the 80,000 quota for seasonal worker entries, for circular migration projects (EMN 2010). Another incentive to circularity that the Ministry hopes to introduce in 2011 is the possibility for migrants who have worked with an employer for one year to come back every year without having to apply for a permit within the annual quotas. However, most Italian policymakers and stakeholders do not have a good grasp of the Commission's definition of circular migration and are skeptical regarding the usefulness of the concept, particularly in the Italian context. An official of the Interior Ministry maintained that circular migration is not simply seasonal migration and that in order to be considered circular migration, a scheme had to include some form of training or upskilling; otherwise, the added value for migrants and sending countries was limited. However, he saw this form of migration as ill-fitted to the reality of migrant work in Italy; "temporary migration in Italy is mainly seasonal and above all extremely low-skilled so there is very little professional enrichment, for example picking apples in Trentino, when you return to Egypt, Tunisia or Morocco, "yes I can pick apples but nobody taught me how to cultivate apples," so it's a very limited concept."

It is generally maintained that the concept would be of low appeal to the majority of Italian employers who need stable workers who they can train in and retain until retirement; they would see no benefit in losing their investment after a few years. Nonetheless, an official from the Ministry of Labour and Social Affairs queries whether policy should be based solely on employer preferences and argues that in a more fluid international labour market employers might be more incentivised to improve wages and working conditions in order to retain workers. The only sectors which require seasonal workers are tourism and agriculture and sectoral employer organisations have expressed skepticism regarding the feasibility of circular migration schemes. Labour demand in the Italian tourism sector is currently satiated by Eastern European, in particular, Romanian workers. The latter are European citizens who can move back and forth freely. Furthermore, informal recruitment channels dominate across the Italian labour market due to, among other factors, the low significance of demand for skilled workers, which reduces the importance of *curriculum* based anonymous recruitment, and the dominance of small family firms. As a representative of employers in the tourism sector maintained "Italian hotels are generally very small, the average has 30 rooms, and often they are the hoteliers' houses so when you want to hire someone and have them sleeping in your house, you need to have met them or for somebody you trust to recommend someone, and the Ministry can never do that." Free-moving Romanians are also employed in northern Italian agriculture. The Southern Italian citrus fruit sector is suffering from a structural crisis in which the possibility of paying decent wages and providing decent



conditions to seasonal workers does not appear to be seriously considered. In fact, with falling international prices for citrus fruit, last year many farmers chose to leave their oranges on the trees rather than pay a worker *below* the minimum wage to pick them (Devitt 2011).

Due to fact that the majority of immigrants in Italy are employed in low-medium skilled work, Italian and Moroccan policymakers and stakeholders do not consider “brain circulation” when discussing circular migration between the two states. An official from the Italian Interior Ministry maintained that circular migration has more benefits for sending countries which now suffered from labour shortages. However, Moroccan policymakers also find the concept to be of limited usefulness in terms of responding to the needs of migrants and countries of origin and destination. An official from the Hassan II Foundation highlighted the fact that the Spanish circular migration programme with ANAPEC involves a small proportion of total Moroccan presence in Spain (circa 12,000 out of a total of 600,000 Moroccans in Spain) and that the “real migration” between Morocco and Spain and Italy is a migration of individuals, facilitated by migrant networks.

Moroccan policymakers maintain that the concept reflects a European understanding that the dominant security approach has not been successful in stopping inflows of undocumented migrants. It is asserted that circular migration is obstructed by European immigration law and the lack of a concerted approach to immigration across ministries and departments, for example, as noted above, circulation is counteracted by the lack of a social security agreement. Notably, policymakers and stakeholders in both states assert that the concept has primarily been proposed as a way of responding to concerns regarding immigration and in particular challenges in integrating foreigners. While the concept of “part-time” migration is considered theoretically positive, particularly if responding to the preferences of migrant workers, it is perceived to be based on a negative approach to immigration based on fear. As a representative of an Italian employers organisation asserted, circular migration schemes focus on incentivising and obliging returns to the country of origin; is return the right priority to have in managing migration or should it not be ensuring decent employment conditions for migrants?

## ***6.2. What kinds of policies are needed to foster circularity?***

### ***6.2.1. Immigration and integration policy***

In order to facilitate “spontaneous” economic circularity, it would be beneficial to reduce restrictions on time spent abroad within the period of legal presence in Italy and to introduce multiple-entry visas, which last a number of years. Regulated circular migration schemes are more difficult to envisage in the Italian case, due to the structural and administrative factors outlined above, which obstruct the existing seasonal labour migration system. Successful circular seasonal migration schemes – indeed, any system aiming to match labour demand and supply before the migrant has entered the country of destination - necessitate a high level of coordination between employers, employment services and the public administration, incentives for employers to work through the system (ensuring the timely arrival of competent workers, providing accommodation for agricultural workers etc.), the enforcement of immigration and labour market regulations and protection of migrant workers' rights (Fargues 2008). It is advisable to organise circular seasonal migration schemes sectorally on a provincial or regional basis.

The stronger an immigrant's legal presence in Italy is, the more likely s/he is to move between the two countries. Facilitating access to long-term residency status and dual citizenship would consequently stimulate circulation. Furthermore, the requirement of ten years of continuous residence in Italy (the European average requirement is five years) in order to apply for Italian citizenship inhibits long absences abroad among those who aim to apply. Attention to circular migrants' specific necessities in the immigration country would also facilitate circulation, for example the possibility for them to avail of special services including the provision of extra lessons for children who have missed school due to

absences abroad and the organisation of sub-letting among circular migrants in order to cover the cost of paying rent while abroad.

### 6.2.2. Labour market and social policy

Moroccan immigrants – and immigrants in general - are concentrated in low skilled jobs in Italy, which do not provide them with the means to make significant investments in Morocco. Indeed, it is commonly understood that immigrants in Italy take up low status jobs rejected by Italians. While filling these jobs may be the priority, in order to incentivise circularity, attention must be placed on providing migrants with training and supporting their upward career mobility. Stimulating self-employment and business creation among migrant workers may also increase levels of economic circularity.

Furthermore, the enforcement of labour market regulations and the contrasting of the large informal economy is a *sine qua non* of effective circular migration schemes. How can a migrant be expected to go home when his permit expires, when he has no job to go home to (see below) and when he can find work in the Italian informal economy? Finally, an SSA between Italy and Morocco allowing for the totalisation of contributions made in the two countries would also incentivise long-term circularity (Venturini 2008).

### 6.2.3. Moroccan policy and practice towards Moroccans resident abroad

Circularity is clearly more likely when people have an economic interest in the home country, for example, if they own land or a business. The Moroccan government could attempt to provide specific investment support to Moroccans resident abroad. The Moroccan authorities do not perceive much potential for extracting expertise or investments from Moroccans resident in Italy due to their concentration in low-skilled employment. Nevertheless, attempts should be made to facilitate and support small investors and groups of small investors.

In terms of the temporary reintegration of circular migrants in Morocco, a representative of the Hassan II Foundation underlined the importance of linguistic competency. Indeed, instruction in Arabic is crucial to maintaining ties with Morocco and circularity among the second generation and should continue to be supported by Moroccan institutions.

Finally, circular migrants complained that the Moroccan authorities obstruct rather than aide their circularity, for example, cars with foreign registration plates are fined if found in Morocco for more than three months. While undoubtedly a source of revenue, disincentives to MRE's presence in Morocco, such as this, contradict the policy of facilitating their involvement in their country's development.

## 6.3. *Is circularity good and for whom?*

Circular migration can be a triple-win situation if the migrant has a preference for “part-time” migration, if his employer needs temporary workers (if he is employed) and finally if the migrant is able to bring something back (money, skills) to his country of origin.

For some categories of circular migrants identified in this study, circulation represents a means of economic survival, for others it is a form of socio-economic mobility. As a representative of the Italian trade union CGIL maintained, if voluntary and facilitated by legislation, circular migration could be

seen as a maturation of the phenomenon of migration, in the sense that “migration from one country to another does not have to be seen as the last beach”. For these reasons, “spontaneous” circular movements should be facilitated. The success of circular migration schemes, which necessarily oblige returns to the country of origin, partly depends on whether the migrants involved have a preference for short-term work abroad as opposed to settlement abroad.

While fixed-term and atypical employment contractual arrangements have been on the rise over the past decade, most Italian employers require stable long-term workers. For them, circularity represents an insecure investment in terms of employee training. For employers of seasonal workers – notably in tourism and agriculture - the question of whether seasonal workers stay in the country or go back to their country of origin after the season is of negligible interest, as long as the workers are there when needed. On the other hand, responding to public concerns regarding undocumented immigration and the integration of foreigners provides Italian governments with an incentive to organise circular migration programmes. Finally, economic circularity is particularly positive for countries of origin when it involves investments and development projects while circular trade, even if small-scale, benefits both economies.

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**Annex 1: List of interviews with policymakers, stakeholders, key informants and researchers**

<b>No. of interview</b>	<b>Date</b>	<b>Organisation</b>	<b>Place of interview</b>
1	9/6/2010	Interior Ministry, Immigration Dept.	Rome
2	17/11/2010	Labour and Social Affairs Ministry, Immigration Dept.	Rome
3	7/6/2010	Emilia Romagna Region, Immigration Dept.	Rome
4	9/6/2010	CGIL trade union	Rome
5	9/11/2010	Confindustria	Florence
6	17/11/2010	Federalberghi	Rome
7	9/6/2010	IOM	Rome
8	5/9/2010	Foreign Counselors Bologna Province	Porretta
9	6/9/2010	Association of cultural mediators	Naples
10	8/6/2010	Fieri	Turin
11	8/6/2010	Department of statistics, Università di Napoli Federico II	Naples
12	11/10/2010	Hassan II Foundation	Rabat
13	14/10/2010	Council of the Moroccan Community Resident Abroad	Rabat
14	14/10/2010	Ministry of the Moroccan Community Resident Abroad	Rabat
15	12/10/2010	Consular and Social Affairs Directorate of the Foreign Affairs Ministry	Rabat
16	13/10/2010	National Agency for the Promotion of Employment and Skills (ANAPEC)	Casablanca

17	13/10/2010	International Chamber of Commerce	Casablanca
18	12/10/2010	Regional Centre for Investments	Rabat
19	15/10/2010	Centre of Demographic Studies and Research (CERED)	Rabat
20	11/10/2010	Moroccan Association for the Study of Migration (AMERM)	Rabat
21	17/10/2010	Migration and Development Association	Khouribga

## **Annex 2: Interview Guides**

### **1. Circular migrants**

**Rationale of the interview guide:** The interview follows the migration experience. We ask the interviewee to tell us her/his story. The idea for asking first how migration started is to understand when and how the ‘switch’ to circular migration/mobility took place. Was it a choice? A plan for improving one’s earnings? Employment? A question of achieving a better quality of life? Or was it out of pure necessity? Did the migrant do it by her/himself or is s/he part of some bilateral agreement? And in all this what are the problems and what are the positive elements in the experience? What are the services and policies that s/he and her/his family used?

Introduce yourself and the scope of the project

When did you first leave [country of origin] and what were the main reasons for emigrating to [country of destination]?

Did you emigrate alone or with your family?

If yes, why – if no, why?

Did you work in your country? What was your profession?

What was the first job that you found in the destination country?

What were the advantages of emigrating to this country (compared to how you envisaged your life would have been in the country of origin)

Mainly economic and work related

Mainly cultural

Mainly political

Did you ever consider going to another destination country?

Why did you eventually chose to go to [name of this country]?

In settling down in [name of destination country], have you faced challenges such as:

Obtaining legal migration status

Finding a job

Language knowledge

Housing conditions

Adapting to the conditions of life in the country of destination

Understanding the mentality of the people

Getting the family to settle down and adapt to the new country

Obtaining long term status

Did you get assistance for any of the above issues and by whom

By co-ethnics and/or migrant NGOs

By the state – please mention specific policies or programmes that helped you settle down



Please discuss...

How often do you go back/home?

How long do you stay when you go back?

Why do you go back?

(the role of co ethnic networks or kinship in promoting/facilitating moving back and forth?)

What are the main issues when you go back / home?

Family issues

Finding a job

Settling down – adapting to the country

Sorting out bureaucratic issues

The lack of infrastructure

Other....

Please discuss...

Why did you leave again?

Why do you go back and forth?

How often do you travel back and forth

Does your family travel with you or are they settled in one of the two countries (and which?)

What are the advantages and disadvantages of going back and forth? in terms of employment – earnings? in terms of quality of life, services, feeling settled into a place?

Are there any programmes or policies in place to facilitate your moving back and forth?

For instance regarding pension, welfare

Regarding education

Regarding possibility to moving back and forth legally

Regarding stay permits / documents for you and your family?

*If relevant:* is your moving between the 2 countries part of some bilateral agreement or programme? If yes how did you find out about them? Please explain how this agreement works.

What services/policies would you like to have in place to help you?

What are your plans for the future?

Is there something that you would like to add....

## **2. Stakeholders**

**Interview guide rationale:** The aim of these interviews is to check

- what are their own (their organisations's) objectives and role in the field?
- which integration/re-integration policies exist and how are they implemented
- what are the different stakeholders' views about the advantages and disadvantages of different types of circular migration,

We shall interview in the destination and origin country

- national, local and regional authorities,
- diaspora and migrant organisations,
- trade unions, professional associations
- business associations, employers
- chambers of commerce,
- academic experts,
- political parties (if relevant)

Introduce yourself and the scope of the project

The department/service/office in which you work deals with migration management or integration issues (ask what exactly)?

What are your tasks/responsibilities in this service?

How long have you worked in this field?

Are you involved in (or simply aware of) [Albanian] people moving back and forth between [Greece and Albania]?

How does this happen?

Ask about specific state or other programmes for such movements?

Ask details about these programmes,

Any special services for circular migrants

Special stay permits and other provisions regarding mobility/transferability of rights

Any provisions for children education and other integration measures for the family?

Or if they think it started spontaneously, why and how did it start?

Ask more details:

which sectors of employment?

how many people are involved in this moving back and forth?

How often do they move?

With or without their families?

What are the special challenges of this going back and forth in:

The field of employment

As regards legal status and papers (stay permits and rights in general)

In the social field (issues of integration, education for children, pensions, welfare services)

What are the preconditions for moving back and forth to have positive outcomes for the people involved (migrants and their families)? For the countries involved?

How do you see such back and forth patterns developing in the near future?

Do you have any proposals or suggestions?

Anything you would like to add...